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SONGS OF THE SPIRIT.

*BY ISAAC R. BAXLEY.*

THE TEMPLE OF ALANTHUR, WITH OTHER POEMS.

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CHARLES WELLS MOULTON,  
BUFFALO, N. Y.



# SONGS OF THE SPIRIT

BY

ISAAC R. BAXLEY

AUTHOR OF "THE TEMPLE OF ALANTHUR,"  
"THE PROPHET," ETC.



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BUFFALO  
CHARLES WELLS MOULTON

1891

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SONGS OF THE SPIRIT.



*I.*

OUT of the numberless, mystical things  
Is one who stands in the steps of Time,  
Await till the Spirit shall gather the strings  
Together that give him peace and rhyme:  
To sound and to echo his Soul is set,  
And his eyes are dim; unheeded there  
Would float in the glory that suns beget  
The sweetest Spirit that winged the air.

But the torture grows and the Spirit never  
Sends from the strings nor its lips a sound,  
And the listening Soul, with a fierce endeavor,  
Buries its heart to a depth profound:  
“If I blot from myself all life and be  
But a terrible question of this—this thing,  
The Spirit must waken to answer me—  
And strike for my ears on the tightened string.”

But the Spirit is far in its Isles of Peace,  
Sitting in sapphire, with pearl aglow,  
And never and never its lips increase  
To sound, nor the strings revive and flow:  
In peace — in peace: sweet, perfect, still,  
Unshaken, changeless, calm, enclosed,  
Sure never possessor of such things will  
Be from its shadowless sleep deposed.



But up from the glory of sight and sea,  
The beauty, the light, and the silent store  
Of a terribly perfect ecstasy  
Its being expandeth out and o'er:  
Light! light! and ever the glow of light!  
With purple, wonderful tints, and hue  
Of something else than the actual sight,  
And something never a mortal knew.

For though he listened, and his eyes refused  
To open for ever a thing divine,  
The glory was freed as a thing unloosed  
To penetrate essence, and Soul, and shine  
Full through and through; and never a cast  
Of his constant lids on useless eyes  
Could hinder th' angelic beams that passed  
His body's sullen and weak disguise.

Within him — out — till he seemed to be  
Transparent in a flame, and thing  
That filled the earth, and filled the sea,  
And grew and ever was brightening:  
He seemed to see himself a shell,  
A husk, a something that contained  
The life of Spirits, of those who well  
Speak out and be with their lips restrained.

For he knew the Light, and its name, and its face,  
And he sat as one convicted — known;  
But speech was vision, and silence grace  
Of expression past all but the Spirit's own:  
And his lips and his eyes were needless: he  
Forgot in his Soul all sound and rhyme,  
For the life of the Spirit he saw to be  
Exhaled — as Eternity breathes on Time.

He rose: for the Spirit faded — passed;  
    Quivered and severed its light aside:  
Things shrank into sight; all the distance vast  
    Of a Heaven was now but the wonder-eyed  
Remembrance of glory, that must be still  
    Engulfed far out in the Isles of Peace,  
Whence it would return if he had will,  
    And his Soul had faith, and his eyes increase.

.

*II.*

NOT only in cavernous homes of the sea  
Are the quenchless stores of things divine,  
Nor does only the willing stars' heraldry  
With the light of their wonderful birth-right  
shine;  
For there are in the heart such things as come  
Not over the sea, nor out of the night,  
And the unknown speech of the Soul is a tongue  
They may listen and wait for in fear and delight.

It may be there lieth in the lips of a Soul  
    Some exquisite blessing of peace unto them,  
Which springs where the ideal spaces roll  
    That their luminous pathways may not stem;  
For the Spirit is perfect, and they enclosed  
    In the hidden life of a thing aside,  
May gather some joy from a Soul transposed  
    In the mystical sight of the glorified.

May the Spirit from out of itself and its Life  
    Ever pour on the bosom of earth and of sea  
Such beauty; a hope of the vanished strife  
    Of the Soul and themselves in Eternity?  
Shall it give from its viewless self impress  
    Of the shining things no star may see,  
And sail far out in a sweet excess  
    To return with the freight of its sanctity?

O! is there still ever in the smiles of earth  
One sweeter than any, and flashing bright,  
Await for the Souls whose holy birth  
Is where the numberless lamps of night  
Needless shine? And do they in patience await  
With all their glory outspread to be  
As servitors unto the radiant state  
Of beatitude bearing mortality?

Ah! is there remaining in cloud and in sky  
The look of the measureless eyes that passed  
All the heavenly courses quietly  
Till they found the rest for themselves at last?  
Is there somewhere set in the things which bear  
The tranquil steps of a Spirit's pace  
Its messages, left in the shining air,  
And over the sea the light of its face?

*III.*

FLY out, on noiseless wings, and be  
My Spirit, something of delight,  
There's not in all Earth's boundary  
A footing to sustain thy flight:  
Thou hast no name, nor ever yet  
Most passionate of any cry  
Could loose the seal of silence set  
On things that in thine essence lie.

O part, part from thy paths and be  
Thrilled with intensified relief,  
Cleft from th' acknowledged misery  
Of an unspoken speech and belief:  
O part; stand out a word — a claim  
Expressing only what it is,  
Impossible for thee a name  
With faintest syllable amiss.

Wearied with hope of far beauty  
Which cannot still thyself proclaim,  
O pass, and burst on ecstasy  
Of being, seeming, known the same:  
O gather, gather to excess  
Thy shining heritage of life,  
Its fullness shall thy cry redress  
And draw thee, vanished, from the strife.



Not only thou, within thy sense,  
Pure, infinitely fine as thou,  
Waveth a flame and light, intense,  
A fervid, penetrable glow:  
Of this within, and round thee, Soul,  
That wide, transparent, endless haze,  
What wonder that betimes unroll  
The hills — translucent in thy gaze.

When thou, O Spirit, hast attained  
Remission from thy fainter birth,  
And when thy weary lips have gained  
Succor from all the words of Earth,  
Then into thine shall glide and grow  
This trembling, inner flame, which is  
Apparent here because below  
Are not the heavenly mysteries.

It quivered as thyself didst play  
And burn out towards The Infinite,  
Thy pathway was a wondrous ray,  
But this intensified delight:  
Thou canst not name thyself, and flee  
Outward for peace, with purpose fair,  
But sweet is still mortality  
If this blooms in its blessed air!

What is this secret in thine own —  
How keepeth thine the inner flame?  
O Spirit, ask how thou hast grown,  
Wherein thy stature, aspect, came:  
Thou art so singularly poor  
To speak, with fountains ever full —  
This flame in thine but little more  
Is mystified or wonderful.

But pass, O Spirit, if forbid  
    To call and cry thyself and thine;  
No more, to thee, is distant hid  
    The sequence beautiful, benign:  
It must, it must break out and be  
    Some transcript of the things that there  
Seem so transparent unto thee,  
    There is some tongue for mortal air!

*IV.*

FOR the glories of Heaven impatiently  
    Pass over the sensitive sea, and things  
Of the Earth are aglow to triumphantly  
    Break out into bloom by the beautiful springs:  
O I see the immortal colors, and wide  
    Are opened the beautiful bounds that there  
Spread out for the Spirit, descending aside  
    Roll the confines that cloud their extent in the air.

The hills that are purple grow golden, and rise  
Upspreading and stretched till their figures become  
Prolonged in my sight to an infinite size,  
And the blue sky flies out from its high-tinted  
dome:

For I see in my Soul as there never a sun  
Rose up in the Earth to enlighten me,  
There is not a darkness nor shadow, each one  
Of the hills is aflame — glowing splendidly.

Out over the valleys and plains of the place  
Run majestic waters; the rivers are free  
To lengthen their courses on, on into space  
Of their wonderful measures set endlessly:  
Ever the perfectest pleasure and peace are displayed  
By the Spirits and Beings who flee out in the ways,  
Where the light of this beautiful land is portrayed  
In a manner unused to my astonished gaze.

For its colors and hues to the tenderest eyes  
Are ever more gentle, and ever anew  
From the unsullied sources of beauty arise  
Most exquisite glories that radiate through  
The waters responsive and hills, that are free  
As a mystical portion of the Life that is  
Encompassed by every serenity —  
Sharing with the Spirits in their harmonies.

And never again is deserted and lost  
From the answering Earth its remembrance and  
sight  
To the eyes of my Soul, that have opened and crossed  
All the distance of darkness and faced upon light:  
There is ever and ever such vision, and vast  
Uprises the Spirit of Earth to the high  
Enclosure of beauty, that descended and passed  
By the sight of the Soul to inhabit the eye.

*V.*

OUTWARD is darkness, and dismay  
Sinks terribly on distant Time;  
As open-eyed we gaze away  
We fade and perish: lo, sublime  
And beautiful appears the Soul,  
Standing forever with its eyes  
Immersed in visions from the goal  
That gives, and draws us, Spirit-wise.

Within is set thy Spirit, so  
The mighty plains within thee turn,  
Therein the Earth shall sightless go,  
Thou shalt not hitherward discern  
But in thyself's forgetfulness,—  
Out of thy casemate forth and far  
Into the lands of loveliness  
Straying, where Souls already are.

A wish — a cry — a glance upwhirled —  
Thy Spirit's loosening — away  
Fliest thou victor through a world  
Abruptly vanquished in thy sway:  
That infinite and fearful sea  
Of substance for the Spirit's need  
Is bound in thine uncertainty —  
Fly forth — what clouds thy wings impede?



To every wind of Earth a wing  
Is feathered, and for every sea  
A flight is measured; wilt thou fling  
Abroad on that Eternity  
Pinions to bear thee, and abide  
Where custom perisheth, and be  
All that thou hast been, and beside  
Spirit released exultingly?

O turn — turn to the inward sea,  
Pass to th' embosomed hills that glow  
Glorious in thy mortality —  
But not where human foot-falls go:  
Thine is the vision — fearful gaze —  
Can stretch, and conquer, and enclose  
The land outspread in sweet displays —  
But not in earth thy roadway goes.

*VI.*

UNLOOSED from the silence of Earth, and anear  
To the wonderful home of the Spirit, in sight  
Of its exquisite safety, its peace, and the clear  
Astonishing day of its life and its light,  
The doubt and the darkness descend and decline,  
And the lips of the Spirit are opened, and flow  
Out into a transport, rising upward the fine  
Exultations of happiness mingle and go.

In an ecstatic bravery the passionate eyes  
Of the Soul extend far from foundations of Time  
Into eternal sources, where upgather and rise  
The outlines that angelic habitants climb;  
And the beautiful visions portrayed overpour  
All the obstinate silence of Earth, and declare  
The ancient outbursts of the Spirit, but more  
Shines the wonderful light that the Spirit shall  
wear.

And the Soul, with its eyes forever steadfast  
To the radiant changes that constantly come,  
Passes with its new feet on the Earth, till at last,  
In all the outgoings, one highway alone  
Is stretched out in its passage, where there hinder  
the way  
No barriers, all the gateways have faded and grown  
Into transparent beacons glowing out in array —  
And the flash of their ending is the light of their own.

And the lips of the Spirits that traverse with flight  
Of their hastening feet on this highway, and go  
Fixed with their bright eyes on the increasing light  
Of their guiding, what speech hath the Earth to  
bestow

To their using — O what is the passion of song  
Themselves to deliver? What fearful display  
Can they grasp from the glorious sights that belong  
To the Soul — and into humanity say?

O the speech of the Spirit is ever anew  
In its choosing, and ever and ever the same  
Is the Spirit, in sound it is hidden, but through,  
Forever, all speech shines its terrible flame:  
Forever the light, in its tempest upspringing,  
Burns the darkness that buries the terrible years,  
Incessantly waken the sounds of its singing,  
Await for the echo in hearkening ears.

*VII.*

I<sup>N</sup>TO another world I saw

And this fell from me, for I rose  
Embodied, not the less that law

Of ancientness was past and closed:  
The sanctioned uses, breath and blood,  
The form, the visage, and the mood  
Attainable to touch, that could  
Be verified, and bear expense  
Of naming, these were passed, and thence  
Upstarting in an altered air  
I lived, though these were never there.

In memory deep, dare I betray  
The settled secrets of my stay?  
Dare I, a solitary tongue,  
Stand out the cadences among  
And claim:— There is a symphony  
Thou hast not sung, that anciently  
Arose and fell, and undisturbed  
Lies whispering still, one deathless word —  
Dare I proclaim the sound I heard?

My Soul is listening and it says:—  
    Speak out, the world is vacant, soon  
The tempests of its tortured ways  
    Shall lift a long uncovered boon  
And bear it far and far; around  
    Swiftly its circuit, till arise  
New speech and knowledge for the sound  
    That is unnamed in all her cries.

And I — I falter: but my Soul  
    Bursts thitherward again, and I  
Grow courage as the glories roll  
    In actual, happy panoply:  
And I descend, and ask in fear  
    My Spirit how the visions came,  
And it responds:— Didst thou not hear  
    Within thyself one common name?

Go call that name; but not as those  
    Have known it hitherward, but say:—  
Of all the melancholy woes  
    Are suffered, none but this sound may  
Dissever, if thou gird'st it fast  
    Thy Spirit, and thy Spirit goes  
Parcelled, apportioned, reckoned, cast  
    Out where the farthest current flows.

So I — I am my Spirit's hest;  
I draw the veil hung in my heart,  
And thou — thou witnesseth impressed  
The sight of which this sound is part:  
Thou seest, closeted within,  
A substance of appearance high  
And singular, which is the kin  
To me, as only kin this cry  
Is unto that sweet, soundless name  
First lightened in obedient eyes,  
When what were words were simply flame,  
Which flew as silent brightness flies.

Sad, undiscovered, sits a thing,  
Endlessly patient in the heart,  
A nameless, constant, chaste being,  
Thyself — but more than still thou art;



For it has wastage, and the pain  
Of wanting, and thy heavy Soul  
Speaks of its griefs in wild refrain —  
But thou deem'st otherwise the dole.

For surely other than to thee  
Is wanting, wastage and dismay;  
By night thou goest, and daily  
Discoverest not this sad decay;  
O fevered, dying, desolate,  
Decrepidly it sits, and wears  
Th' immortal anguish of its fate,  
And sees run out th' immortal tears.

If thou could'st know, could'st only guess  
Th' unknown prisoner in thyself,

Thy Soul and thou, despatched, would bless  
    Its fearful penury with wealth;  
For 'tis not yet thy Soul, nor thee,  
    Sits so unknown — so long — so long —  
Thou hast the rhyme, the words, the key,  
    But O, thou hast not yet the Song!

Into the land of Spirit I  
Looked as a guest swiftly sent by;  
There, radiantly pure, and clad  
So beautifully nothing had  
Much more of shining vesture—so  
Unveiled and tearless, bright, aglow  
With happiness and long content,  
I saw this Being, who had spent  
Ages and ages burdened — bent.

But as I looked I could not tell  
Which creature fashionèd the spell —  
The heart of Man — or Woman's heart —  
Or Spirit — healed with perfect art;  
I knew, and only knew, arise  
This Being, and my daring eyes  
Looked swiftly on the thing within  
Myself — and saw this Being's kin.  
Which was the vision, and the name  
Soundless so long, so long in shame  
Sunken beneath its altar-flame.

*VIII.*

**I**N unexpected mysteries  
A Spirit's shape engendered is:  
Impalpable and active—real,  
Powerful, keen, wearing the seal  
And fashion of a subtle thing,  
Fearless, ennobled, excelling.

As one uncomprehended, known  
But hastily, as something grown  
Amiss unto the eyes of men,  
It shows its visage shortly, then  
Turns from the staring gaze and is  
Again with obscure mysteries.

But in that mystery there is light;  
Lost unto men upon the sight  
Of this, that Spirit, rapidly  
Dissolves its own obscurity:  
It comes again, and throws afar  
Splendor of which its sources are.

Lone, speechless, fearless, undisguised,  
It passes many a path despised,  
And many a question, many a blame,  
Calls out in scorn this Spirit's name:  
Thou art not one of us:—so says  
The caviller consciously in phrase  
Of rectitude—wherefore arise  
These beings in their strange disguise,  
And singular evidence that we  
Are not sufficed in harmony?

But the bright Spirit, passing by,  
Leaves light of something splendidly  
Settled on surfaces that know  
More quickly to catch up the glow  
Of beauteousness; but after him,  
When what he left is dull and dim,  
As vision lasts, accusers stand,  
Lifting each long, reviling hand,  
Deriding o'er the darkening land.  
But they, they cavil and forget:  
But he returns: more fearful yet  
Out of unspoken sources fly  
The records of his radiancy.

So fearfully increases light  
Of him, so terrible the sight  
Of one who stands, transparently  
And dumb, beside that you may see

The compass of his mysteries,  
And, seeing, may partake of these,  
That some who cavil, silently,  
Little by little, in degree,  
Unwrap their garments and enclose  
Mystery that from this Spirit goes.

But he is heedless, as one blest  
With instinct of a far-off hest;  
And, having patiently disposed  
His trappings, where there shines enclosed  
An increase ever marvelous,  
Passes as one who says:—And thus  
Shall ye who take persistent give,  
Also, the increase ye shall live.

*IX.*

THERE was something—a substance—an evident  
thing—

And it rose and enveloped myself, and it grew  
Apparent and passive, but so encircling

Myself it was heedless, and never it knew  
Of my presence, but the light of its wonderful grace

Was astir for another than I, and it sent  
Exquisite enquiry flashed out of its face—

But tranquility out with the earnestness went.



I stayed, as remaining an onlooker may  
Who is silent and stricken, whose eyes are a-fast  
Upon things in a distant and uncertain way,  
As one in the sight of a vision that passed:  
But the thing that I saw seemed nowise to me  
Like to unsettled shades, in their terror arrayed,  
But the manner of all had most benignantly  
Passed into the sense of my Soul as I stayed.

That the quivering cadence of light, as it moved,  
Sought out of the subtleness whereof it came—  
Down in its excessively, tenderest loved  
Recesses—a consciously tremulous flame;  
And the glory of Earth, and the tinge of the air,  
Partook of an exquisite temper untold  
As the outstretching Spirit expanded in rare  
Distinctions of beauty, its delight to unfold.

For I saw in the mystical Spirit a thing  
Disbelieving; a terrible cry of the earth  
Was shrunken, and silent, and disappearing,  
Emerging, existed the delicate birth  
And the multiplied self of a Spirit, anew  
Set trembling in certainty out on the gaze  
Of the passionate cycles of horror that grew  
Abundantly over its birth in the days.

And I listened: what glories of speech would betray  
In an adequate rapture release and express  
Most profoundly their knowledge, what a sanctified  
way  
Was sufficed to the need of their loveliness:  
But they tarried; and I saw that they knew and  
displayed  
Most totally out of their consciousness all

Of their secretest wishes, that stood out undismayed  
In a silence that spake with no lips and no call.

And this was their beauty of speaking, and this  
Was their mystified manner, and flashes that  
were

Unto them an expression, the identical bliss  
Of disclosure accomplished; discarding the near  
And the nearest design of emotion, to be  
Expressive themselves, as expression arose,  
And, released from their ardent identity,  
Each Spirit of one did the other disclose.

X.

I SAW peculiar excellence  
Of sweetness, and a piercing light  
Of power, burning with intense  
Illumination and delight.

Within the lustre there was hue  
Of delicate, almost odorous  
Admixture of some colors, through  
The glow displaying marvelous.

There was not any other where  
Such thing in such exact display,  
This flame that lived leaped in an air  
Had hither swept some distant way.

It was, indeed, arriving so,  
With some peculiar color sent,  
Fanned of its individual glow,  
And mixed with other airs content.

But there was still shining discourse,  
And an unshaken origin  
Vividly flying with the force  
Of all its substance blended in.

Which curious, because estranged  
From much that easily was placed  
About, with wonderfully arranged  
Circuits, exquisite, happy, chaste.

Perplexing was the permanent  
    Remaining and abiding so  
Of still and still this wind, that went  
    Still something as it used to go.

A Spirit,— for Spirits arise —  
    Guardians administering aid,  
Intelligence sent from his eyes  
    Enlightening, and smiling said:

This deathless, undisturbèd flame,  
    This wind that beareth all apart  
Itself, this is the throb that came  
    Unto the Spirit in the Heart.

*XI.*

WRAPPED in a veil of darkness, and distressed,  
Stands the imprisoned Soul, with anxious eyes  
Set to the coming of a long impressed,  
Expected breakage in the distant skies.

There is no guidance to the Spirit's feet,  
No beacon on the Spirit's eyes ablaze,  
That breaks not farther than the farthest fleet,  
Illumined wandering of mortal rays.

So is the Soul in silence and oppressed,  
    Sadly disclaiming with its tearful eyes  
Each avenue of passage, till expressed  
    Out on the night th' instinctive glory lies.

Little by little, as the glimmerings go  
    Faintly around the far-off horizon,  
The sad eyes of the Soul steady, and grow  
    Fixed at the light dilating passing on.

Forgetful, with its silent habitude  
    Of waiting yet more passionately still,  
The figure of the Spirit stands as stood  
    The long and gentle patience of its will.

Flashing, reviving, radiant and keen  
    Spreads the expanding glow, and separate  
Extends a glorious pathway out between  
    The watchful Soul and that angelic state.



Immediately, with peaceful passage out,  
Glides the illumined traveler, and goes  
Pacing past anxious ways that oft about  
Its walk of light their avenues disclose.

Wide in that country of celestial light  
The Spirit's eyes continue, and acquire  
More and more fervently the strong delight  
And brilliant conquest of its sacred fire.

Thence to the boundary coming, and entrance  
Obtaining where its glorious ways invite,  
The Spirit trembles in the sweet advance  
And gentlest presence of celestial sight.

Distinct, and differing in tenderness  
From every glory and from every shade,  
Through all, in a majestic holiness,  
He enters, unmistakably arrayed.

Therein the passion of the Spirit sends  
    Its outcry, and, its heart delivering,  
Stands in the sweet discernment that extends  
    Forever from The Light administering.

*PARADISE: PART FIRST.*

SHINE out, O struggling Soul, and break  
Enlightened in the sounds that clung  
To silence; loosen time and take  
The burden of thy mystic tongue.

Thine are the eyes uplift and see  
The fashion of exquisite grace  
That clothed the Earth, and anciently  
Settled with peace her sacred place.

Thou seest from a distant height  
Of journey, and the fervid rays  
Of an unconquerable delight  
Deliver up the ancient days.

For these were days of Time, and still  
Unseen abide as time descends  
Slowly from out the gates that will  
Illumine while he re-ascends.

Unseen in time have vacant gone  
The beautiful and brilliant hours  
That closed in darkness, as in storm  
Dismay bewildering falls on flowers.

But every blossom where delight  
Had passage dyes the silence still,  
The steady Spirit-eyes in sight  
Of blessedness with passion fill.

Passion of purity, and see  
The fashion of a sight that is  
Not other than the Soul shall be  
Uplifted in its mysteries.

For beautiful, O beautiful  
Abide the answers of desire  
That gazes fast and terrible  
Into the living, sacred fire.

And beautiful, O beautiful  
Fulfil the far anxieties,  
So perfect in that mystical  
Delight the Spirit knows and sees.

Where rest these pictures in their peace?  
Shall they discover in a long  
Immensity and flight; are these  
Signs that are far, and far belong?

Nay, to the radiant Earth they still  
Unfold, and stretch in silence wide  
About her aspect, wrapped until  
The Soul shall draw their veil aside.

For over them the Soul hath cast  
Her sweet, delighted orbs, and stood  
With them in kindred, in the Past  
That bore her in its plentitude.

The Soul remains, and still abide  
These harvests for her faithful eyes,  
The breath that calls them to her side  
Is the low burden of her sighs.

And she, that sufferer divine,  
Reviewing with astonished sight  
Her far-off memories that shine  
Unquenchably in their delight,—

Attaining, gazing, holding still  
The deathless secret of her own,  
With seeds of blessedness shall fill  
Furrows her frailty hath sown.

O blind, so blind: oblivion fell,  
Blotting her beauty and her peace,  
She was a child of simple spell,  
And saw her simple mystery cease.

She rose and knew but beauty; saw  
But sweetness, and the splendid ray  
That glides out of the single law  
Of loveliness attained alway.

The loveliness remains and goes  
Idly and uninhabited,  
So close to the sad Soul that knows  
So little of the ways it led.

For she, the blighted Spirit, takes  
    Slowly possessions in her hands  
She newly sees, and vacant makes  
    Their number over as she stands.

Touched with another sense and shape  
    She hesitates in weakness, knows  
The sad, sad secret that could slake  
    One sorrow in a thousand woes.

And so she journeyed, sad, disguised,  
    Empty of innocence, and fast  
Forgetting glory that, despised,  
    Disdained, dissembled, faded — past.

For this, her blessed Paradise,  
    That filled her Spirit and her scene,  
Lay in the light that filled her eyes,  
    She saw delight, nothing between.



And she was fashioned in her cell  
Of innocence and sanctity,  
As one wrapped in a secret spell  
Of absolute and sure beauty.

She was the star that sent its ray  
Without itself, and blazed abroad,  
Lighting with brilliancy always  
Whatever passages she trod.

And lost, O lost: she sees and knows  
Her sorrowful encasement, where  
Feebly her shadowed aspect glows,  
And hesitates in darkened air.

And she is prisoner; encased  
In the sad confines that arose  
Around her eyes; abroad the waste  
For passage, and within her woes.

She knew a vision that dispelled  
    With sorrowful invective all  
Her fearlessness, and built and celled  
    Her dungeon and its massive wall.

Thereby in ages hath she wrought  
    Distressed, standing betimes to see  
On the far outlook something sought  
    By bitterness but certainty.

Darkened, o'erburdened, blighted, spent,  
    Lo, inextinguishable alway  
The glorious brilliancy that went  
    Within herself that sombre way.

She kept, sweet Spirit, kept a-stir  
    Her memory in slumbering,  
And lo, in ages back to her  
    Revives its ancient cherishing.

'Twas long, so long.    There stands to touch  
    Her eyelids with impassioned balm  
New Knowledge — strong, bestowing much  
    Intensest ecstasy and calm.

Outward — onward:    She pauses slow  
    Over the wastage that extends  
Out of the secrets she did know  
    And listens where their echo sends

A tremulous, devoted tone,  
    And where with bright impatience flies  
Radiance, in passages that own  
    Their freedom to her fervid eyes.

For her unconquerable gaze,  
    Profoundly darkened in the sight  
Of hidden things, reviving plays  
    Exquisitely with ancient light.

Regaining transport, vivified  
Flashes her longing, and her eye  
Exulting plays around the wide  
Domain of vanished misery.

Released, unbound, the prisoner goes  
Appareled with majestic mien  
Of one forgetful in her woes,  
Impassioned in a glittering scene

That soothes her; penetrating far  
In aisles of memory to raise  
Reviving ecstasies that were  
Companions of her happy ways.

O Spirit, sweet, brilliant, secure,  
Regarding with thy clear-eyed glance  
Things of the Soul, deathlessly pure  
Thou passest in thy high advance:

Whereon thy fearless eyes are set  
Hath power to draw thee, and endue  
Unconquerably the things that yet  
Remain thy glories to pursue.

Endowed, illumined, living, strong,  
Unswervingly the Spirit makes  
Its passage, gathering what belong  
Of memory and hope, it takes

Into its heart its story old  
Of innocence, and sees arise  
Again the legend's lettered gold  
Outspread upon a new sun-rise.

O beautiful, and widely bright  
Spreadeth the glory, with its hue  
Enlivened in the straining sight  
Of those sad eyes that only knew

A darkness as they longed and gazed,  
With passion fearfully intent,  
And a wild heart, distressed, amazed,  
And agony exhausted, spent.

O Love, thou tenderly restored,  
Expanded, beautified, endowed  
With powers for thy sweet reward,  
And all thy shining Soul allowed:—

O Love exempted, pass and see  
Thyself a portion of the sight  
Glowing with rapid brilliancy,  
And glittering in fond delight.

Thou art, O Heart, with Spirit made  
One of the sweet, assembled throng,  
And what thou seest, swiftly displayed,  
Is but the brightness shall belong

Within thee, for thou art indeed  
Mysteriously wrapped in thy Soul  
Again, and ever round thee speed  
Thy lightning joys, and round thee roll

Great clouds of color and content,  
Bearing their mighty wings a-wide,  
Ever with newness resplendent,  
And ever in fresh glory dyed.

For there embosomed shalt thou see  
Deeper and deeper thy delight,  
With colors kept a-wait for thee  
To penetrate in keener sight:—

And there are incandescent things  
Of exquisite, ennobling shade,  
And there a wondrous virtue flings  
Abroad its powers, richly displayed.

For these lie out again for thee,  
Stronger, O Spirit, that thou hast  
Re-entered on the heraldry  
Of thine ancestral, happy past.

Thy past re-pictured in thy gaze  
Burningly set on yonder high  
Exulting prospect, that displays  
Grandly an ancient panoply.

Thou seest in thine heritage  
Of being such intensified  
Expanse, and thitherward engage  
Thy longings ever magnified —

And endless harmonies of light,  
That are devout, serenely pure,  
With them, O Spirit, in thy right  
Of company thou shalt endure.



Look out, O Spirit, from thy place  
Of passage with attentive eyes,  
Thou seest thy surprising grace  
Of completeness, and canst devise

Abundantly thy beauty spread  
With visual perfectness, and fair  
Extensive happiness instead  
Of all thine old, abundant care.

Within thee blossom and unfold  
Thy gorgeous consciousness, and hope  
To gather still thy fruits of old,  
And see again their richness ope.

O Soul, there fervidly arise  
Translations of thy purest sense,  
Thousand and thousand brilliancies  
Succeed with eagerness intense:—

For they shall be unto thyself  
Instinctive, and their majesties,  
With all their destiny of wealth,  
Adapted to thy sacred eyes.

Thou hast descended, Spirit, far  
On downward wings, and didst alight  
On a changed Earth, as on a star  
Distempered of its happy light:—

But now thou standest to upraise  
Thy pinions and float out afar,  
Like to a golden cloud that plays  
Within itself, and yields a star.

For thou shalt glitter and display  
All the unclouded Soul that kept  
Its secret undisturbed away  
While in the night thy vision slept.

In darkness closeted, O Soul,  
Thou wert a-wonder how, displaced,  
Should pass thy heart's imprinted dole,  
And bloom thy loveliness defaced:—

But thou art touched in transport fine  
And blossomest where'er thou art,  
Clothed with repeated splendors shine  
Thy Soul and thy terrestrial part.

Thou art so passionately stirred  
Thou standest with thy wavering feet  
Upstarting, as of one who heard  
Within thee speech and Spirit meet.

Thou seest as a part, afar,  
Sublimely weak, but still endued  
With sweet, perceptive things that are  
Of those that all thyself include.

Because thou hast impassioned wept  
Amid thy weakness, and bewailed  
All the disordered days that kept  
Their closeness in thy path assailed;—

Because the trembling of thy feet  
Went wearily, and sorrow hung  
So low thy roadway could not meet  
Delight, but to the darkness clung;—

Because of this, O Soul a-wide  
With virtue, knowledge, and arrayed  
In wisdom, thou hast joy denied  
So long — and now so long displayed.

Thou hast attained the perfect sight  
And searching of thy Spirit eyes,  
Thou read'st thy shining laws aright,  
And failure from thy vision flies.

For thou art portion, seeing writ  
Thyself a letter in the theme,  
Await for glory, watching it,  
Thou art transfigured in its gleam.

O Paradise! O Love dismayed !  
Return, thou Wanderer divine,  
No more thy gentle orbs afraid  
Of tears are full, but brightly shine.

Thy long, unconquerable spell,  
In sorrow and to grief assigned,  
Is gone, thy Soul goes out the well  
Besought deliverance, consigned

Unto the beauty of its own  
Expanding, and thy yielding heart,  
O Love, with all its treasures known  
Follows but only what thou art.

Descending is a Spirit come  
Touching thy consciousness anew;  
This Holy Traveler from the dome  
Of Heaven administering flew:—

He telleth of a new increase  
Grown for thy vision, and displayed  
O'er thy horizon, and release  
Of longing for thy succor made.

Thou art not prisoner, detained  
In terrible distress of speech,  
Already freedom's wings have gained  
For thee their swift, encircling reach.

Already what thou hast not been,  
With all thy wings unconscious furled,  
The sweet eyes of thy Soul have seen  
Ascending o'er her darkened world.

Thou hast walked separate, alone,  
    Impossibly beseeching rest,  
But now thy tender heart hath gone  
    But as an imaging impressed

On what she seeketh, and in air  
    Sublimely tempered for thy ways,  
Already now, O creature fair,  
    Is Joy delivered of thy days.

In tears, unhidden tears, delayed,  
    Thine only and unmeasured end  
Rested within a Voice that said  
    Its messages a-flight to send

Their radiating knowledge far;  
    Within the message art thou found,  
O Love, a listener on the star  
    Of Earth, and in the mighty round

Of worlds aside art furnishèd  
With being for thy sweet increase,  
Because thou art absolved, instead  
Of wanting thou abid'st in peace.

O Spirit, breaking Time and Place,  
What is the passage unto thee?  
Thou fliest through intensest Space,  
And penetrating rhapsody

Of an hereafter breaks aglow  
In thine admission on the star  
Whose longings infinitely go  
Beyond the boundaries where they are.

Spirit in Spirit shall abide:  
Earth floats in her ancestral sea  
Of Spirit, and that viewless tide  
Bears on her courses hastily.



Fly out, O Love, and stretch thy wing  
    Earliest above th' imprinted wave,  
Where hues of Heaven descend and cling  
    On Earth, entrancing what she gave.

There, living on that vivid sea,  
    Love, like an Angel, fans the air  
With pinions that have swept the free  
    Regions remote from her despair.

She is a-new — doubly upborne,  
    Thou hast not seen her in the days  
Of desperate Earth, no face hath worn  
    Her look where visage doubly plays.

Go down, go down unto the shore,  
    Look out upon the lightening sea,  
Its placid offering before  
    Hath spread those treasures silently.

Long, long ago, thyself hath stood  
Idly debating on the shore,  
What shadow now shall e'er intrude  
On light those ancient waves restore?

Thine is the sea, the waves belong  
To the full Earth, and unto thee  
Its breast is open; press the strong  
Throb of its bosom willingly.

Held to its heaving heart the Soul  
Draws nurture; see! divinely free  
Over that endless aspect roll  
Magnificence — Eternity.

*PARADISE: PART SECOND.*

TO be a part of Beauty, and sustained  
Within its halo, and to recognize  
Divinely all its glory as regained  
In the quick vision of uncovered eyes:—

To know the sunken and disastrous, slow  
Beclouded burden of my perilous way  
Drew wide its darkness, and its overflow,  
Because that sightless orbs would still betray:—

To pierce with passionate ardor, and design  
Of seizing, all the heavy shade that lies  
Enveloping, and with the sight combine  
That ever hither comes, is Paradise.

Out of The Spirit that portrays shall grow  
Unanswerably its fashion on the eyes  
Of gazing men — shaping their glances, show  
Its glimpses, and thy gleams, O Paradise.

Not in forgotten outlook, with unknown  
Beatitude designed in formless grace,  
O Paradise, thy glories are our own  
With all their knowledge breathing on thy face!

Thy countenance with wisdom, and divine  
Adoption of thy secret purpose, is  
Displayed unhidden as thy movements shine  
Perfect in consciousness — perfect in bliss.

Thine is the wide, mysterious power that drives  
Darkness to nothingness, and distance lies  
Bound up with insight in the light that lives  
Forever where the Soul accepted flies.

O Paradise, thy breathing stirs the air  
Floating with golden clouds of Earth on high  
Entablatures of glory, and their fair  
Exquisiteness is in thy masonry.

Thine are the crimsoned harbingers that burst  
From out their secret sources to proclaim  
Nativity of beauty, and dispersed  
Round their horizons wide assert thy name.

Thy passionate appearance of delight  
Abides in waiting, till the eyes shall glow  
In answering earnestness, until the light  
Of Spirits pierce their prisons' overthrow.

Thou stretchest in thy country's bounds apace  
Over the shores of Earth, and sinking seas  
Of many a desolately tortured place  
Gleam in the glory of thy soft increase.

Thou waitest with thy splendid fringes cast  
In finest radiance o'er the wind and cloud,  
And O, with what intensest brilliance last  
The visions where thy glittering flashes crowd.

Thou art not, Paradise, removed and far,  
Remotely distant from our anguished eyes,  
See there, O Spirit, these expressions are  
Drawn from her heavenly and fair supplies.

There is her beauty, and her tender sense  
Of lovingness, and her still hands arrayed  
In succor linger, longing to dispense  
Over the Soul her comforts there delayed.

Thou art, O Paradise, a Radiance sent,  
Divinely purposed and divinely clad,  
On thine attirement hath The Spirit spent  
Its making, and perfection makes thee glad.

Sent from the judgment of The Spirit's sense  
Thou walkest, and thy gentle, patient face,  
With all its beauty, hath that impress whence  
The Spirit looketh from its secret place.

Thou art defended, for thou wearest guise  
Of Immortality, and hath bestowed  
All the impregnable unknown that lies  
In Spirit whence thy sacred being flowed.

But thou, so beautiful, aside, unknown,  
Unto the thousand, thousand eyes afar,  
Dwelt in thy mystery; thine aspect shone  
On Earth but beauty on a whirling star.

Thy Spirit, and thy panoply displayed,  
Hung but as curtains on a moving air,  
Lost palpitations of thy being made  
No movement in the veins of grief and care.

Thou wert a-weary, anxious and oppressed,  
In all thy nearness and in all thy grace,  
Lo, to the lifting of thine hands distressed  
Cometh the speech of His exquisite Face.

Quick, wonderful, thy bursting joy divine,  
The fleetness of thy footsteps, and the sight  
Of thine uncovered mysteries, that shine  
Outstarting in their glorifying flight.

In those unceasing steps sustained and led,  
Walking appareled of thy fair array,  
Lo, in all darkness still thy name is said,  
And thou, thou standest still in every way!



Thou art, O Paradise, set in the ways  
Of listening Earth, and ever in her eyes  
Thy face with its angelic ardor plays,  
And fast before thy beauty doubting flies.

Thou shalt thine own upgathering bestow,  
And go and leave thy precious gifts outcast;  
The rapid splendors of thy garments glow  
On every outlook where thy feet have passed.

And so forever, with increasing shade  
Of vivifying certainty, and gleam  
Of thy supplanting glory, intermade  
In every outburst of thy changeless theme.

Beauty and purity, and long, profound,  
All passionate adornment of the Soul  
In each exquisite symbol, an the sound  
Of the long anthems that within thee roll

With silent music upon silent ears,  
And, more than any, the great joy that takes  
The ancient founts of all unfinished tears  
And of their waters crystal grandeur makes.

Descend, descend, O walk in changeless Day!  
My Paradise thou art a child of Light!  
I hide me in thy visions, and alway  
Watch out within their fairness time and night.

There is no dark shall dim thee, and no toil  
Found in an Earth of furrows, and no care  
From any cloud descending taught to soil  
The virtue of thine ever-living air.

Within thy joys I see, and feel the eyes  
Sink to a source of beauty, and distil  
Themselves within a sweetness, and arise  
Part of thy purpose and thy gentle will.

Part of thy undulations and unknown  
Expressions yielding up their endless rest,  
Part of an equal, fervent Life, that sown  
With answer sows thee equal in the quest.

I can not compass and arrange thy way,  
I go a-journeying, bidden into thee,  
I step upon thy roads, whose gates betray  
But glimpses of magnificent entry.

Can I, exclaiming in a wondering phrase  
Of jubilation at thy earliest sight,  
Can I surround thy glory, and appraise  
Thine outposts glittering in extended light?

O Paradise, I know not whither go  
Thy messengers of glory, and no more  
What paths outflying shall my Spirit flow  
On clouds of thine, that rest by mortal shore.

Receive me, with my outstretched wings I fly  
Gently, O gently into thy domain,  
Bear up, O bear my wavering pinions, I  
Trust all my being to thy sheltering name.

I go unto thy country and thy Lord,  
None knowing but the Sentinel who stands  
At the receiving Gate, can I afford  
To claim the compass of thy blessèd lands?

Lo, in the circuit of those distant wings  
I fly where thou shalt bear me, and divine  
Whate'er thou tellest, and my passion sings  
What words are spoken in thyself to mine.

Thou and thy Lord, and I inhabitant,  
O Paradise, I know enough to be  
Smitten to heart with one exulting want,  
Blazing within my Spirit's alchemy.

The want, the need, the passionate desire,  
The yearning, bursting pain of heart and Soul,  
In thy pellucid atmosphere, and higher,  
Beyond thee, where thy wishes gently roll,

To be a Vision of ascending things,  
And, them receiving, gaze until my eyes  
Draw my Soul onward, and my Spirit flings  
Itself where thou wast nurtured, Paradise.

*SONG OF THE SPIRIT.*

I AM a Spirit, floating on,  
My danger and my darkness done:  
Into an open Sea I glide,  
Within the cloud, within its tide:  
Round the Sea's rim light clouds hang low,  
And round its circuit drifting go.  
I can not stand upon the shore  
To traverse that wide water o'er:  
However desperately my eyes

Are anxious of the light that lies  
Unbosomed on the earnest deep,  
I can not have it while I keep  
My passion pacing out the land,  
And so I leave thee, helpless strand.  
I glide and glide: O the sweet view  
Of all I knew not and I knew:  
No more with slow, untempered wings  
My Spirit lingers, but it flings  
Itself where music waiting sings.  
Ring out, O Voices compassed well,  
Ring out thy conquering tones and tell  
My Spirit in thy Spirits' tongue  
What joys I see and thou hast sung.  
To see! to see! who would not wait  
Leagues of a long-drawn sun, and late  
By every morn and every shore  
To see at last, and wait no more!

My Soul, with thine imploring eyes  
Made in the need of Paradise,  
Delay, and gathering hold the rays  
Burnishing every prospect's ways,  
Slowly within thy fluttering breast,  
O longing heart look out and rest!  
There is no need that thou shouldst fly  
In eager, wild rapidity;  
There is no need that thou shouldst keep  
Watch stealthily as sorrows creep,  
Without a change and without haste,  
Out of their caverns and their waste  
And stop where thou art helpless placed.  
Sorrow is heavy, and must roll  
Below thy footsteps, O my Soul:  
At last thou art, thou radiant thing,  
End of thy passion's desiring,  
Delivered like a wild being,



Rapidly whirling and circling,  
Breaks from the angered cords and fast  
Darts out its tether and its past  
Far out, far out, beating to free  
Thy flight, thou struggled desperately:  
Swiftly the rushing of thy wings  
Sprang outward, and thy freedom clings,  
Ever rejoicing, sailing through  
The splendid world it struggled to.  
Sorrow was in thy Soul that hung  
Compelled on the dark Orb that clung  
Mysteriously upon its road  
Of bondage, with mysterious load.  
Into the World's sad days of shade  
Thy passionate appealing made  
Its glimmer, and, unstartled, flew  
On rapid wing thy Spirit through.  
Stand still: let the slow mists arise

Of sweetness in entroubled eyes —  
This is the sun of Paradise.  
There is not one, a cloud of care  
Hung in the heavens anywhere:  
There is not one, no loveliness  
That thou hast longed for in distress,  
Not clinging, with its light caress,  
O'er anything it would impress.  
Many the cold, unbelieving eye  
Crossed in its storm-cloud on thy sky;  
Many the low and wintry word  
Muffled thy human heart that heard;  
Many, O Soul, stood changeless by  
Thine issuing: when thou shouldst die  
Innumerable stretch out to close  
Thy vision in its dark repose.  
O Spirit, thou hast fled a-blaze  
Far from the lands their darkness stays:

Thou wert indeed of Time, but why  
Should Time condemn thee vacantly?  
Into its sun of circling days  
Thou waked and slept: alternate rays  
Flashed on thy Soul as lightning plays,  
And darkness robs the quivering gaze.  
But now thou art disrobed of night  
And standest flashing in the light:  
No more the heavy circle clings,  
Of vesture, on thy Soul that flings  
Her desperate beams, anxiously wild  
To burst or blind her guards beguiled.  
At last! O Spirit what a wing  
Sails outward as thy circles swing  
Their heavenly courses, and alight  
On stops of glittering, sacred sight!  
Thou couldst not gather, couldst not sing  
This passion of thy surrounding;

Thou couldst not loosen in the world  
These instant wings, wafting unfurled;  
How couldst thou speak sufficiently?  
O this the being, being free —  
Released from hope in radiancy!  
Sail on: there is no sea of storm,  
No tempest rock, to strike thy form:  
Long in its casemate burned aglow  
Thy Spirit, but its vanished flow  
Shines out on that tremendous sea  
That rolls in light continually.  
Thou art not one of those who stand  
Spectred and faintly on the strand:  
On its wild edge of long distress  
Their shades diminish and grow less,  
And fail and sink to nothingness.  
Their gleams burn faintly as the years  
Of cold delay, and doubt, and tears

Pass by them, heaping up the brine  
Of all their wretchedness and thine.  
My Spirit, when that burning Sea  
Broke on thyself mysteriously,  
Mysteriously beyond the gloom  
Of Earth a-chill within her tomb,  
Deep with thy feet into the flow  
Of its long currents didst thou go,  
Standing and wavering, waiting there  
Till they should rise, and outward bear  
Thy Spirit, and thy Spirit's eyes  
Gleamed as the mighty breakers rise.  
Swept outward, with the winds upraised  
Thou art borne onward, pleased, amazed:  
Tell me, my Spirit, why, O why  
Can such as thou strangely deny  
The long and luminous things that lie  
Stretched out to their obscurity?

Wert thou of different life from these,  
How came thy wonderful increase?  
Why have they pain and thou hast peace?  
There is not one in all the shore,  
Wrapped in the waves' incessant roar,  
Who hath not in his bitter eyes,  
Pain, and her silent, stifled cries.  
And yet, O Soul, if they should glide  
An instant on this brilliant tide,  
Be lifted, with its winds supplied,  
And see one vision of its wide  
Revolving glow and gorgeousness,  
There is not one could know distress.  
It is impossible to be  
Freighted with pain upon this Sea:  
Some things belong to some, and there  
Are things not nurtured everywhere —  
Have suns a night to dream despair?



So, whoso peopleth this Sea  
Is perfectly and placidly  
Fixed into Joy's identity.  
Should the dark Spirit stand to care  
In questioning, to be aware  
There is not pain nor sorrow there?  
Have pain and shadow grown so dear  
The Soul should separate not for fear,  
Out of what losing? Or abide  
With them? Poor Spirits — chained, belied.  
And yet they stand: they can not see  
The cloudless air, they will not be  
Drawn from the shores of misery.  
Dash on, eternal, dreadful Sea,  
Break on thy bounds unceasingly:  
There is upon thy changeless roar  
An endless strain; increasing pour  
Thy billows on the sinking shore.

Thou art the Monarch, and shalt ride  
Deep with the Earth within thy tide:  
O how thy mighty waves shall strain  
The banks of Time, and grain by grain  
Draw what thou keepest for thy gain.  
Where are thy depths? O Sea, below  
Thy bosom is a fearful flow,  
And dreadfully thy soundings go.  
I am a Spirit, floating on,  
My danger and my darkness done:  
Into an open Sea I glide,  
Within its cloud, within its tide:  
O yielding Sea, O air of balm,  
Intensest peace, impassioned calm,  
How can my Spirit quivering be  
Replete with all thine ecstasy?  
Long, long ago I yearned to be  
Out — sailing somewhere on this Sea:



I yearned, and dreamed, and felt arise  
A new desire, a swift surmise,  
As one in many mysteries:  
I dreamed, and saw, and moved upon  
Thy bosom, not myself alone.  
Lo, in the circuit of this Sea  
I am the thing dreamed anciently:  
Whatever else sails in the sun,  
Mysteriously, of this kingdom,  
I am the being my Soul said  
Could be, I am this being made.  
Who standeth sinking in the shore  
Of a dead Earth, and cries, "No more,  
No Soul can rise, no being be  
Not known of us, we can not see!"  
Say on, say on: while I fulfil  
My heart, my purpose, and my will,  
Thy work is doubt, and doubting still.

Another speech, another tongue  
Flames in my Soul; whate'er I sung  
Of its vibrations all was rung.  
It is not possible to stay  
This flaming speech, that far away  
Hears loud what it can faintly say.  
Out of the sounding echo goes  
This leaping flame, who can oppose  
Its passage, who its virtue knows?  
O happy feet that fled the shore,  
The land is dim, if the waves pour  
Their wrath, and all their steady roar,  
I can not hear nor see them more.













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